

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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THERE IS MORE TO INSULATION...

It is well-known that building insulation can bring energy savings; greenhouse gases emission reductions; higher energy security; higher employment and competitiveness. It is however not as well-known that building insulation also triggers significant public health benefits and thus reduces related societal costs. How? Because building insulation reduces energy used in domestic heating and cooling and as a consequent the related outdoor air pollution. A recent Eurima sponsored research across EU25 Member States shows that there are significant societal savings, both in terms of health and life expectancy as well as related financial savings which can be above 6 billion € per year.

To do so an improved insulation scenario with an annual retrofit rate of 2% was compared with a business-as-usual one from the period 2005 to 2020. A first study focussed on the effect on air pollution. A second study translated this impact into avoided health problems and related societal costs.

Influence of building insulation on outdoor concentrations of regional air-pollutants

The focus of the first part of this research was on the main air pollutants, i.e. ozone, particulate matter, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide throughout six European climate zones.

The largest total reduction of emissions of pollutants was found for North-Western Europe. Especially the effects on emissions of particulate matter and sulphur dioxide are significant, respectively up to 9 and 6.3% reduction compared to a business-as-usual scenario.

The study has been published in the Journal "Atmospheric Environment":

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1352231012000738>

Modelled effects of an improved building, insulation scenario in Europe on air pollution, health and societal costs

The second part of this study demonstrates the benefits of housing insulation in terms of societal savings, both in terms of life years and costs.

In total, the economic benefit of the insulation scenario in Europe is 6.64 billion €/year (ranging between 1.5 and 40 billion €/year). As a point of comparison the Belgian health expenses are 30 billion €/year.

The study is available online via: <http://odel.irevues.inist.fr/pollution-atmospherique/index.php?id=4780>

ENDS

Background Information

Eurima

Eurima is the European Insulation Manufacturers Association, representing the interests of all major mineral wool insulation producers throughout Europe. Eurima members employ over 21,000 people across Europe with the installation of insulation products accounting for an estimated 300,000 man-years.

Eurima members manufacture mineral wool insulation products. These products are used in residential and commercial buildings as well as industrial facilities. Glass and stone wool insulation secure a high level of comfort, low energy costs and minimised CO₂ emissions. Mineral wool insulation prevents heat loss through roofs, walls, floors, pipes and boilers, reduces noise pollution and protects homes and industrial facilities from the risk of fire.

Buildings in the EU

Buildings are responsible for the largest share of European final energy consumption (40%) and they represent the greatest potential to save energy - as 75% of buildings standing in the EU were built during periods with no, or minimal, energy-related building codes and the energy intensity of heating per floor area is two times higher than any other region of the world (except Russia).

Buildings are long-term assets expected to remain useful for 50 or more years and 75-90% of those standing today are expected to remain in use in 2050.

For further information on benefits of insulation in buildings, please visit www.eurima.org or contact:

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